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Packaged Place

Citation for published version:

Hall-Lew, L, Paiva Couceiro, I & Fairs, A 2016, 'Packaged Place: Tour guides' commodification of sedentarism and mobility', Paper presented at Sociolinguistics Symposium, Murcia, Spain, 15/06/16 - 18/06/16.

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

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Packaged Place: ***Tour guides' commodification of sedentarism and mobility***

Lauren Hall-Lew, & Amie Fairs
Inês Paiva Couceiro



Citation:

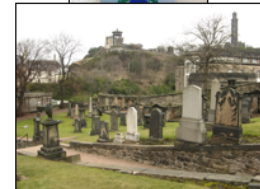
Hall-Lew, Lauren, Inês Paiva Couceiro, and Amie Fairs. 2016. Packaged Place: Tour guides' commodification of sedentarism and mobility. Paper presented at the *Sociolinguistics Symposium*, 21. Murcia, Spain.

Mobility and Sedentarism

- This talk joins the others in this colloquium to consider the concepts of *mobility* and *sedentarism* (Cresswell, 2006; Britain, fc.) by examining how “sedentary practices and ideologies of places influence speakers and language” (Quist & Monka, this session).
- In this talk, we consider tourism in Edinburgh, Scotland:
 - **‘Speakers’** – professional tour guides working in Edinburgh, Scotland
 - **‘Language’** – Scots, and ‘Scottish’ and ‘non-Scottish’ varieties of English

Mobility, Sedentarism, & Heritage Tourism

- Tourism is a canonical example of **mobility**.
 - (Sociolinguistic work includes, e.g., Heller 2003; Salazar 2005; Pietikäinen & Kelly-Holmes 2011; Gao 2012; Thurlow & Jaworski 2014, among others.)
- *Cultural or heritage tourism* is driven by the ideology of **sedentarism**.
 - The 'authenticity quest' (MacCannell 1999/1976)
 - Especially *ancestral tourism* (e.g., Sim & Leith 2013)



Tourism, especially international tourism, is one of the most canonical examples of mobility.

Today we focus on cultural or heritage tourism. The consumption practices of a heritage tourist are guided by an ideology of sedentarism, or what MacCannell termed an 'authenticity quest'.

This is quest is exemplified by something very important in Edinburgh, which is *ancestral tourism*, when a tourist travels to an ancestral homeland to explore their 'roots' and visit the graveyards of ancestors, both the epitome of sedentaristic idealism.

Tourism in Edinburgh, Scotland

- Tourism/service is Edinburgh's largest economic sector.
- Old Town: 'Central tourist district'
(Burtenshaw et al. 1991)
- Heritage tourism:
 - Products gain commodity value through being indexed as 'authentically Scottish'.
 - 'Scotland' becomes a Packaged Place.



Tourism is Edinburgh's largest economic sector.

The high street in the Old Town, called the Royal Mile, is a perfect example of Burtenshaw et al.'s 'central tourist district'.

Heritage tourism is the most visible type of tourism in Edinburgh. Products gain commodity value through being indexed as 'authentically Scottish'. 'Place' becomes a packaged product.

Language & Tourism in Edinburgh, Scotland

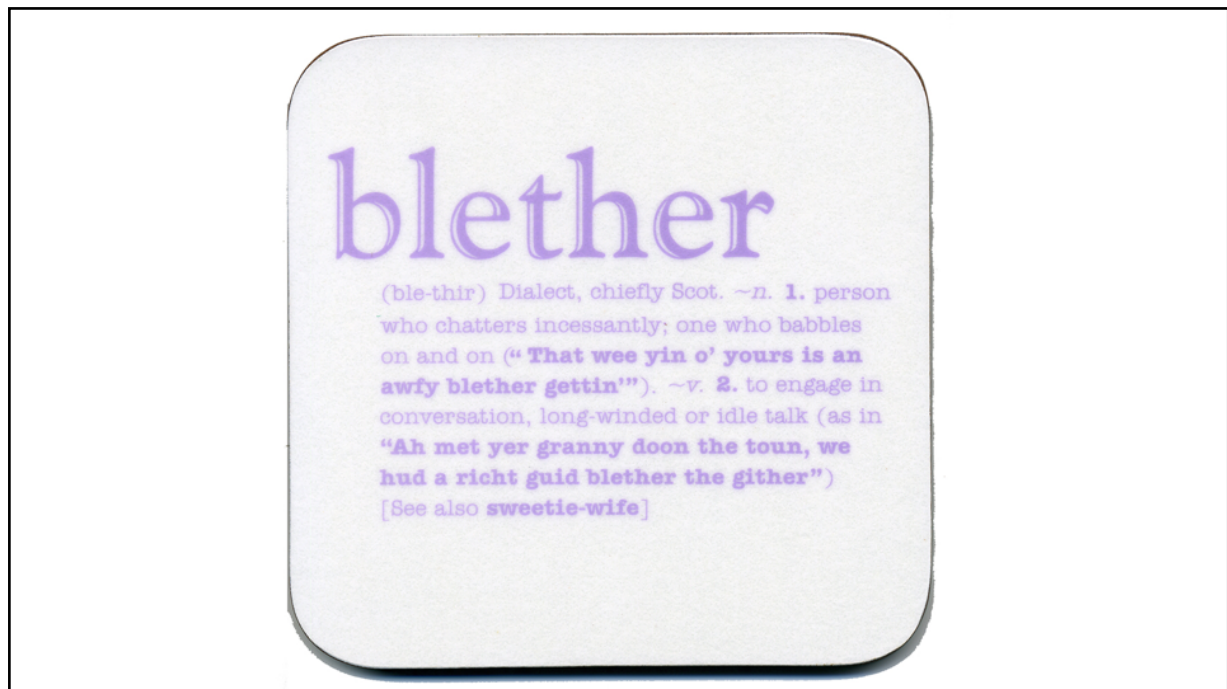
- *Language is a Heritage Tourism product.*

- **Example:** Scots words on souvenirs.
- Everyday objects are marketed at high prices when Scots words are added.
- Scots words are *a*lways accompanied by an English translation.
 - Unintelligibility is commodified.
 - Difference from English is commodified.
 - Unintelligible Scots is a sedentaristic ideal.



Language is a heritage tourism product in Edinburgh in several ways. The most obvious is the use of Scots on products to create souvenirs. Regardless of Scotland's multilingualism, only the Scots language is constructed as 'authentic' in the heritage tourism industry. Everyday objects become valuable products when Scots words are added to them.

The words are always accompanied by an English translation. Unintelligibility, and difference from English, are therefore also commodified. Both contribute to the framing of Scots as a sedentaristic ideal.



Here's an example of one of these products. The main Scots word is followed by a dictionary-style definition in English, which is accompanied by an 'example' of the words' use in a kind of hyper-Scots frame, presented in bold face. The bold implies that the more important part of the product is to experience the less-intelligible Scots, rather than the translation.

In short, souvenirs like these make it clear that the Scots language is an example of commodified authenticity in Edinburgh's heritage tourism economy.

However, because of Scots being unintelligible to the tourists themselves, the informational *tours* that English-language tourists take are given in English. This shifts the domain of authenticity and sedentarism from the lexical level, with words like *blether*, to the phonetic level, where the contrast emerges between Scottish and non-Scottish accents.

Language Attitudes in Edinburgh's Tourism Industry

- Hall-Lew et al. (2015)
 - 49 Edinburgh tourists
 - Preference for 'Scottish accents' in imagined scenarios of a *tour* and a *train station*, but no particular preference for a *comedy show*.
 - Regardless of tourists' demographic differences
 - Regardless of if they could understand the accent
- Accent preferences & Place consumption.
- How do professional guides respond to this?



Photo from: http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g186525-d3876875-i68756655-Edinburgh_Tour_Guide-Edinburgh_Scotland.html

Today's study follows on from a study with 49 Edinburgh tourists of various backgrounds and travel motivations.

Our results showed overwhelming preference for 'Scottish accents' when tourists imagined themselves in scenarios of a *Royal Mile tour* or buying a ticket at a *train station*, but no particular preference for when they imagined being at a *comedy show*.

Regardless of tourists' demographic differences.

Regardless of if they could understand what was being said in the accent.

We take this as evidence that tourists' accent preferences are expressly linked to their consumption of Places; place-based indexical meanings are sedentaristic products.

How do professional guides respond to this market demand?

Edinburgh, Tourism, Mobility, & Sedentarism

- Tour guides embody the market pressures of heritage tourism (see, e.g., Coupland et al. 2005).
- Edinburgh guides provide a sedentaristic product.
 - E.g., content: historical facts and stories
- **How does a tour guide negotiate (or capitalize on) the Place-based indexicalities of their accent?**



Photo from: http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g186525-d3876875-i68756655-Edinburgh_Tour_Guide-Edinburgh_Scotland.html

Tour guides embody the market pressures of tourism; they package and sell their linguistic productions to meet market demands.

In a heritage tourism, the demand is for a sedentaristic ideal.

Linguistically, this can be conveyed through content: the telling of historical facts and stories.

And it can be conveyed through sociophonetic indexicality, which we explore today:

How does a tour guide negotiate the Place-based indexicalities of their own accent?

38 Edinburgh-based Tour Guides

- One-on-one interviews in Summer 2013
 - 18 F, 20 M; ages 20-75 (median = 54)
 - Diverse national and linguistic backgrounds:
 - Edinburgh (N=20), Other Scottish (N=8)
 - N. English (N=4), S. English (N=1)
 - N=1 of American, Australian, Argentinian, Chinese, German
 - Native English-speakers (35), non-native English-speakers (3)
 - Several guides from both groups guide in multiple languages
- Interview questions on the role of 'Scottish languages, dialects, and accents' in 'the Scottish tourism industry'.

38 face-to-face interviews, July-Sept 2013

You can see their social characteristics here. Many of them were born and raised in Edinburgh, but several others were not.

Most guides were native English-speakers (35), but several guides from both groups guide in multiple languages.

We asked them a range of different questions about the role of 'Scottish languages, dialects, and accents' in 'the Scottish tourism industry'.

Results: Accents & Commodity Value

- Most guides readily frame accents as tourism commodities.
- Overall, the value a guide gives to sedentarism appears to be related to that guide's ability to claim and commodify authenticity through speech, i.e., to produce a 'Scottish accent'.



We found that most guides readily frame accents as tourism commodities.

Overall, the value a guide gives to sedentarism appears to be related to that guide's ability to claim and commodify authenticity through speech, i.e., to produce a 'Scottish accent'.

Sedentarism has Commodity Value

“I think it enhances the overall experience. People come to Scotland to experience what Scotland is all about.”

- (Alfie, *Edinburgh, Scotland*)

“I think the Scottish dialect is important because it establishes the actual identity of the nation.”

- (Zerubbabel, *Edinburgh, Scotland*)

“I can’t think of anything worse than coming to Edinburgh and getting an Australian tour guide. Or an English tour guide.”

- (Bob, *Edinburgh, Scotland*)

From this perspective, speech forms that index sedentarism command exchange value, while speech forms that index mobility do not. Guides who express this ideology are usually Scottish.

Mobility-based Markets: *Immigration*

“I used to be a hotel manager...whenever I...advertised jobs I had a lot of excellent qualified Polish people, overqualified Polish people. ...But I always **resisted on having a Polish person on reception**. I had them waiting and everything, in housekeeping, but I just felt **there should always be a Scottish welcome** when the person first arrived in the hotel. But it got harder and harder to get this, uh, to keep this because we didn't get Scottish people applying for the jobs. ... and so it almost sounded racist as I always felt, I was always worrying in case I was, I'm sure I was countervailing, uh, employment law by, uh, but **I always wanted this Scottish voice to welcome people when they arrived at the front desk.**”

- (Neil, Stirling, Scotland)

Edinburgh is itself is, of course, not really a sedentary place. For example, *immigration* results in an increase in a Place's cultural complexity. There come to be more and more producers of heritage tourism products whose speech indexes their mobility, which can be at odds with the perception of consumer demand for sedentarism.

<quote>

Here we see sedentarism commanding such a high economic value that it impacts hiring and employment practices. The image of Edinburgh as a multicultural Place is positioned at what Goffman or MacCannell would call the *back stage*, while the ideology of Edinburgh as culturally sedentary is put on the *front stage*.

Mobility-based Markets: *Emigration*

“The ones who would be most interested [in Scots words] would be the Canadians, the Americans, the New Zealanders, and Australians, because a huge proportion of them **come back because they have family from here originally**, and then you know all of a sudden you're talking about **the language of their great-grandparents** or whatever and of course when we do the tour I'll do Robbie Burns where again, I will use Old Scots, and of course you do have to translate it into new English but they like the ‘currie’, and ‘shoggle’, ‘braw’, ‘bonnie’, very, very simple words but of course that **gives you a connection with history** as well.”

- (Andy, *Dunfermline, Scotland*)

The contrast to *immigration* is *emigration*, which results in populations of people with Scottish ancestry who are living outside of Scotland, whose visits to Scotland embody mobility while also incurring a high value onto sedentaristic products, which guides notice:

<quote>

Mobility-based Markets: *Emigration*

“I think it’s really important because I know one of their first questions is kind of, especially being from the States, we know the reputation that we have, so I make a joke about it ‘I know that you’re all wondering what can this American girl tell you’ and so I get right in there and I say ‘**Half my family, believe it or not, I’m actually half**’ you know? And I throw that out there. I think that gives me a little bit of a **security**.”

- (Sophie, *Virginia, USA*)

This value is also a resource for non-Scottish guides with their own Scottish ancestry.

<quote>

Here, Sophie draws on discourses of sedentarism to counteract the perceived disfluency between her embodied mobility and her tourist’s expectations.

Constructing Mobility Value

“I feel like my advantage is ... I’ve done all the museums and things like that because I was a tourist as well so I kind of think that’s my advantage, even though they’re local, they may have been born and raised in the city and they know it backwards and forwards, I know the history too but I also know what my people are probably going to be interested in doing, and **give them a genuine review** on whether that’s good or not.”

- (Keith, *Victoria, Australia*)

More typically, though, we see guides born and raised outside of Scotland invoking discourses of *mobility value* to *counteract* the perceived value of sedentarism. In other words, the performance of mobility is framed as a valued product. One way of performing mobility value is for the guide to align themselves with the tourists.

<quote>

Note here how the guide invokes a contrasting notion of authenticity, using the term ‘genuine’ to refer to a perspective based in mobility rather than sedentarism.

Constructing Mobility Value: *Multiculturalism*

- Example 1:
 - Non-English tours for non-English-speaking tourists (e.g., Wilson, yesterday).
- Example 2:
 - English tours that construct (Scotland and) Scots as a multicultural product.



Another way of performing mobility value is the discourse of multiculturalism.

One common example of this is when guides talk about how they work for companies that employ guides with non-English language backgrounds to lead tours in those languages, which is a hugely profitable part of Edinburgh's tourism economy.

Another example is the case of an English-language guide countervailing discourses of sedentarism to construct Scots itself as a multicultural product.

Constructing Mobility Value: *Multiculturalism*

“I like saying about the Scots that it is, it is a **melting pot of all the cultures and peoples who brought something to Scotland**. So, you’ve got your French, your ‘ashets’, your gigot o’ pork, or whatever it is, and you’ve got your Scandinavian from the Vikings as well. And you got your Anglo-Saxon and you’ve got, you know, and I just love bringing up, you know, and Gaelic, of course, you’ve got your Irish Gaelic, so you’ve got **all of that mixed into your Scots.**”

- (Merita, *Argentina/Scotland*)

Here, the guide describes a kind of historical linguistics lesson that she enjoys giving her clients, which reframes Scots not as a sedentaristic ideal but as the result of mobility.

Constructing Mobility Value: 'Clarity'

"A lot of people who I deal with wouldn't understand a Scottish dialect because they're from a foreign country... [With] English-speaking visitors, some of them wouldn't understand a Scottish accent either. And, so, in fact as you can hear, I don't have a Scottish accent and a lot of people are quite happy with that, 'cause they say 'ooh that's good, I can understand you'. And I have heard that for other guides as well, **they get work because they speak very clearly, and they don't have a strong accent.**"

- (Silver, *Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England*)

Our last set examples today are about the theme of *clarity*.

The construction of Scottish accents as both authentic and unintelligible, like the souvenirs with Scots words, is the most predominant theme in our tour guides' metalinguistic comments.

We focus here on the parallels between sedentarism and unintelligibility on the one hand, and mobility and clarity on the other.

Tour guides without Scottish heritage predominantly invoke clarity as a commodity value counteracting their lack of access to Scots and Scottish accents. Here is one guide from Northern England:

<quote>

In these quotes, guides construct mobility value essentially through what Lippi-Green

has termed Standard Language Ideology.

‘Non-Scottish’ accents are framed as standard, clear, international, and desirable.

Mobility is framed as an asset.

Constructing Mobility Value: 'Clarity'

"I'm the popular one because usually...everybody can understand me. .. People just say that they can understand me so clearly, you know, and that they think this is really great."

- (Estelle, *Hamburg, Germany*)

"When I speak to tourists I tend to speak a more, not mid-Atlantic, but more **pan-world**, kind of easier to understand in a lot of places. ...I try more just to make myself more easily understood."

- (Marc Anthony, *Portugal/Spain/England*)

Interestingly, this applies to both native and non-native English speakers:

<quote>

Here we see that *English with a non-native accent* is constructed as more intelligible than Scottish-accented English.

Mobility Value & Style-shifting: Clear Scots

“Even though when I speak with my friends I have a very broad West coast accent, **I even it out when speaking to tourists...** I try and keep my accent as levelled and slow and easy to understand as possible. But I wouldn’t really say that’s going for a different dialect. It’s just trying to be **clearer than what I normally would be.**”

- (Gladys, *Paisley, Scotland*)

Sedentarism and Linguistic/Moral Purism

“Some of my colleagues have what I would call a **delivery voice**. I hear them doing it. And I just think **that's not good for them**. I don't think it's good for them because I'm just me I do not change anything. I'm very **professional** when I'm working and I'm thinking the whole time about what's ahead and what, you know? But I don't change my accent or manner, really. And when I hear them, I think, I don't think that's good for you and I don't think, uh, the guests will find that helpful. ... I think, ‘Why, why are you speaking to me like that? That's not...’ And they go <laugh> And I think, **‘That's not right.’ It's false.**”

- (Stooshie, *Edinburgh, Scotland*)

Conclusion

- The heritage tourism industry is one that caters to mobile persons through the commercialization of sedentarism.
- *Sedentarism* and *Mobility* are commodified values in heritage tourism contexts (cf. Heller & Duchêne's *Pride & Profit Values*).
- Their negotiation is part of what positions a guide within the professional hierarchies of a heritage tourism industry.



Thank You!



Thanks to funding from:

- Innovation Initiative Grant (*University of Edinburgh Development Trust*)
- Philosophy, Psychology & Language Sciences Pilot Grant (*University of Edinburgh*)

Thanks to helpful comments on earlier versions of this talk from audiences from the U of Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt University.

Thanks to Malene and Pia for organizing the colloquium! 😊

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